

## Statement on Iraq Drawdown

Written by Mike Honda

Thursday, 02 September 2010 10:16

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Earlier this week, President Obama announced the end of our nation's painful seven year long war in Iraq. August 31, 2010 marked the official end date to U.S. combat operations in Iraq, a war I have staunchly opposed and voted against since its beginning.

My constituents have long been tired of this war. They understand that our troops have been put in harm's way for too long. They understand that we have spent an inordinate sum of tax dollars fighting a war that should have never been waged. They understand that our economy is suffering as a result of our resources being poured into this war.

As a member of the Out of Iraq Caucus, I feel strongly that the American people were misled into supporting the war in Iraq, and have advocated for safely redeploying our troops from the country and focusing our resources elsewhere. In 2007, I joined nearly ninety of my colleagues to pledge that I will only support appropriating additional funds for U.S. military operations in Iraq for the protection and safe redeployment of our troops out of Iraq.

At its peak, the Iraq war degenerated into a dangerous sectarian civil war and put our troops in grave danger, killing over 4,000 men and women in our military. Tens of thousands more suffered injuries and post traumatic stress disorder upon their return from Iraq. Our taxpayers have paid more than \$700 billion to finance this war.

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In his address to the nation, President Obama acknowledged that the drawdown of our troops is far from a clean cut exit from Iraq. I agree with him that the drawdown does not warrant a “Mission Accomplished” banner and is by no means a victory lap. Now is not the time to celebrate the end of the war—for although security gains have been made and violence has lessened, we leave behind a politically unstable and barely functioning democracy in Iraq, along with 50,000 U.S. troops.

Moving forward, we must commemorate the men and women who have given their lives in this conflict. We must honor our troops and families who have served and sacrificed over the past seven years, and help the veterans who have returned home reintegrate into society. Most importantly, we must work with Iraq as it stabilizes and becomes a completely independent government, and hope we may soon fully remove all of our troops.